

## Attendees

### The Committee

Anthony Browne (AB) – Chair  
Laura Cox (LC)  
Sheila Drew Smith (SDS)  
Jeremy Mayhew (JM)  
Andrew Williams-Fry (AWF)  
Jonathan Cave (JC)  
Stephen Gibson (SG)

### RPC Secretariat

Hiroko Plant (HP) – Head of Secretariat (Apologies)

### BRE

Chris Carr (CC) – Director (item B)  
Joanna Rodin (JR) – Deputy Director

### Apologies

Brian Morgan (BM)

## A. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising (13:00-13:10)

### Minutes of May Committee Meeting

1. The May minutes were agreed subject to one error being corrected which read ‘November’ instead of ‘March’ referring to the previous minutes. [post meeting note -The correction has been made and the minutes have now been published on the RPC website].
2. All action points from the May meeting were completed or discussed in the meeting with the exception of action 8, which was to consult with BRUs regarding changes to scrutiny process of measures outside the Better Regulation Framework ensuring that final proposals are both visual and directly linked to the current system. This work is ongoing and will be reported on at the next Committee meeting.

### Register of Interests

3. The Register of Interests was circulated in advance of the meeting and updated by the Committee. No further interests or conflicts were recorded at the meeting. This will be published on the RPC website.

### Gifts and Hospitality Register

4. The Gifts and Hospitality Register was circulated in advance of the meeting. There have been no gifts and hospitality received since the last entry in November, and no members noted any additions at the Committee meeting.

## B. BRE Update

### Political Context

5. CC gave the Committee an update on the preparation of the BRE Better Regulation Report 2018/19 and the issues surrounding it.

### Call In Update Progress

6. CC informed the Committee that Lord Henley had a meeting with the DEFRA minister regarding the call in of the Agriculture and Fisheries Bills. The Chair said that the call in system does not appear to be working for the RPC and it is reducing its credibility. CC reassured the Committee that it was important that the call in process should work and he will work over the summer to ensure it does.

### **Better Regulation Annual Report Publication – Progress**

7. This topic was covered in the above discussion on the political context.

#### **C. White Paper on Regulation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution**

8. JR introduced the BRE paper on regulation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. It is set around six principles with associated streams of work. A pilot is being developed with a number of departments which the RPC Secretariat was involved in, and BRE would welcome further RPC involvement. The pilot would result in an ‘innovation test’. SG commented that this approach appeared similar to the Competition and Markets Authority competition assessment which looked at whether the measure was likely to have an impact on competition and, if so, required an in-depth competition assessment.

#### **D. Engagement Updates**

9. The Chair and the Committee engagement leads set out their activities since the last Committee meeting in May.
10. The Chair had his regular quarterly meeting with Lord Henley that morning. The discussion was mainly around how to improve the call in process and to make PIRs more effective.
11. SG had the following engagements:
- Oliver Clifton-Moore – Chief Economist, Department for Education
  - Gemma Peck – Board Level Champion, HM Treasury
  - Catherine Colebrook – Chief Economist, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
- The outcome of each of these was developing the engagement between the RPC and these senior officials. Each department was pleased to have met and were keen to continue working well together. In the next couple of months, SG is also due to meet with John Curnow (Chief Economist, DEFRA) and Laura Webster (Chief Economist, DWP), though dates are yet to be set for these meetings.
12. JC had the following engagements:
- Met Sarah Connolly, responsible for Internet Harms at DCMS. Discussed the potential for improving the logical linkage from evidence of harm to policy proposals, the practicalities of evidence collection and analysis/attribution, and the specific challenge of IAs and PIRs for Statutory Duties of Care.
  - Attended RegWatch Europe/RSB meetings in Brussels on the Future of Better Regulation.
  - Attended ESRC evaluation of Understanding Society which involved planning for use of resources in IAs and PIRs.
  - Met Jacob Wood (Principal Economist, Ofwat) discussed the assessment of indirect and wider effects and fitting IA/PIR to a range of different regulatory decisions in network industries.
  - Attended the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies - considered role of exercises, challenge inspection data and modelling in policy development and RPC for scrutiny of regulations relating to animal health.

#### **E. Post-Implementation Reviews (PIRs)**

13. The Secretariat provided a summary of the issues resulting from the survey of PIRs. PIRs are not working as effectively as they should, and the RPC has been receiving fewer PIRs than expected. It was felt that since producing PIRs was costly and time-consuming for departments, the RPC should develop criteria to determine which reviews departments should focus on. The Committee was asked to provide a feedback on priorities from the paper for the RPC to develop.
14. The Committee were concerned about the low submission rate and that departments were not doing well in producing PIRs. The Committee agreed that producing PIRs was costly, the timescale meant that people in the department had moved on by the time that PIRs needed to be undertaken and the lack of data was a key issue. It was felt that the RPC should comment at the outset in its opinion or on an IA if it did not commit to undertaking a PIR and outline plans and resources required for the PIR. Support is needed from ministers pushing for PIRs and HMT to make resources available to departments. The Committee asked for a PIR paper to be produced for the November meeting.

#### **F. Centre of Excellence (CofE)**

15. The Secretariat presented the paper on the Centre of Excellence project, which sets out the proposed workstreams and activities, how the transformation into a CofE would be marked by continuous demonstration of excellence through pieces of work and expertise and the PR to ensure external awareness. They said that they would welcome comments and priorities from the Committee. SDS said that one key factor was that the RPC website should be easy to search and navigate, and that before it is released there should be user testing. AWF commented that the RPC should first demonstrate that it is functioning as a CofE rather than just calling itself a CofE.

#### **G. Any Other Business & Date of Next Meeting**

16. There was no further business.
17. The next Committee meeting will take place on 9 September 2019.